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S. Home selects police chief

SWEEP HOME — Jeff Lynn, a Sweet Home native and 14-year veteran of the police department, has been selected as the community's new chief of police from a field of 25 applicants from across the county.

Lynn, 41, succeeds 27-year veteran Bob Barford, who will retire May 31.

"I've learned to count on Jeff's sound decision making during times when I was absent," Barford said. "I'm confident he will live up to our department mission statement: Integrity and Service."

Lynn's starting salary will be \$6,000 per month.

A 1988 graduate of Sweet Home High School, Lynn earned a degree in economics from Oregon State University in 1992.

Lynn started as a patrol officer in 1996, was promoted to detective in 2003 and to patrol services sergeant in 2007.

On April 24, Lynn and fellow finalist Steve Amette, chief of police in Douglas, Wyo., were introduced to the community at a meet-and-greet event at the police department.

Lynn said these skills are needed as the department faces issues regarding tribal funding and retention of qualified staff.

Lynn said he set his eye on becoming a chief of police 10 years ago and began gaining the knowledge and skills he thought he needed for the job.

Lynn said many facets of operating a police department are the same from town to town, but leadership is what sets a good chief apart from the crowd.

"I feel extremely fortunate to be able to serve as the chief of police in my hometown. It's a blessing to be a police officer in your hometown, let alone police chief," Lynn said.

Lynn and his wife, Tiffany, have six children.

His parents, Bill and Betty Lynn, still live near Sweet Home. His sister, Capt. Jo Longstre, works at the Salem Station-Journal.



Sheep graze in a field of drier near Crawfordville. Some farmers are pulling sheep off the drier fields early, worried that a continued lack of moisture may hamper seed germination.

Dry weather worries farmers

HAZARDESBURG — Oregonians don't usually have to pray for rain, but mid-valley farmers have turned their eyes skyward, hoping the forecast of rain this weekend is accurate.

Cooler temperatures have already moved into the mid-valley, and meteorologists are predicting rain by late Saturday and Sunday.

Rainfall in the mid-valley is 60 percent of average since January, 43 inches compared to a norm of about 23 inches.

That's causing concern for farmers regarding a potential loss of seed harvest, and farmers' operations vary of a wildland fire season that could be just around the corner.

"I haven't started to screen drought yet, but we do need rain," said Harrisburg grass seed grower Nick Bowers of K3 Seed Solutions.

In one area, most of the beaver dams are OK because they seem to have retained moisture, but the gaps with sandy, siltstone land are

probably getting pretty low on water," Bowers said.

"It should be time for the clover to set seed," Bowers said. "We usually run sheep on the clover this time of year, but we've had them off because we're concerned that if we don't get rain, the plants won't have time to come on. We usually don't worry about it because we usually get some rain in June."

Bowers said the mid-valley could see a "good half-inch of rain over a couple days. It needs to stick."

Bryan Orlund of the Oregon Rivergrass Commission said the lack of rainfall since January was exacerbated over the weekend by 30-plus-degree weather and gusting east winds that wicked moisture from crops and the soil.

"Most of the spring crops that weren't irrigated are definitely affected," Orlund said.

"Even though we were short on moisture, things were still in pretty good shape, but the weekend weather really hurt."

Orlund said irrigation companies have been bombarded with customers trying to get their irrigation systems up and running, well ahead of the usual curve.

"There's no doubt that all eyes are on what's happening in terms of weather for the grass seed folks," Orlund said.

"Energy goes into the plant first and then into the seed head. If that energy was expended into the plant and there's no rain, the seed head may not fill efficiently."

Orlund added that mid-valley farmers have turned some of their land that had been planted in grass to other crops after several years of low prices and a lack of inventory.

Farmers have turned to clover, radishes, turnips and wheat.

"But we're pretty much out of inventory," Orlund said. "This would not be a good year to have a short crop."

Ackroyd defense team gets discovery material from DA

BY ALLEN PAUL  
ALBANY DEMOCRAT-HERALD

The Linn County District Attorney's Office has provided John Ackroyd's attorney with more than 1,000 pages of discovery material, Judge Carol Bingham was told Wednesday morning during a pretrial conference.

Ackroyd, 61, was charged in April with the 1990 murder of his stepdaughter, Kachanda Lee Pickle, then 13, she vanished from the family's home at the State Highway Division maintenance yard near the Santiam Junction. The body never has been found.

After two decades of work, the Linn County Sheriff's Office used new DNA evidence to formulate a "no-body homicide" case against Ackroyd, who is serving a life sentence for the Christmas Eve 1978 murder of Kaye Jean Turner in the Meladous River area. He was convicted of her murder in 1993.

Ackroyd did not appear in court Wednesday due to medical issues, said his attorneys, Elizabeth Baker and Russell Barnett of Eugene.

"The defense has received a good part of the discovery materials we have available," said prosecutor George Pickle.

"It's a lot for them to look at and a good bit of work for them," Pickle is being assisted by prosecutor Coleen Corda.

"We have reviewed about 1,000 pages so far and we expect to get at least one more box," Baker said.

"That's another 1,000 to 2,000 pages," Judge Bingham asked if 60 days would give the defense enough time to review the materials before a status hearing was scheduled and if the legal counsel might be developing a settlement plan.

"I don't know yet," Pickle said.

"It's a bit early, but we would have time over the next 60 days

to discuss this among ourselves. It's hard to make a commitment now."

Baker said she and Barnett need time to "build a rapport with our client."

Baker was asked to represent Ackroyd only hours before his arraignment on April 3.

A 30-minute status hearing was tentatively scheduled for 9 a.m. on Tuesday, May 6.

Rachanda Pickle was 13 years old when she disappeared on July 10, 1990. Ackroyd worked for the State Highway Department and had gone to work that morning, but he returned home early.

He told law enforcement officials that he asked Kachanda if she wanted to go for a walk, that she declined, and that when he returned home, she was gone.

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IN THE NEWS

Julia Ariza spent 18 days on the stand sharing intimate, emotional and often times X-rated details of her life before a rape television audience. She had hoped it all might convince a jury that she killed her one-time boyfriend in self-defense.

But the eight children's buy it, covering Area of first-degree murder after only about 15 hours of deliberation. 87

Nine days after Boston Marathon bombing suspect Timarion Tsarnaev filed for bankruptcy with police, counties still refused to take his remains and government officials deflected questions about where he could be buried. On Wednesday, police in Worcester, west of Boston, pleaded for recalculation, saying they were spending tens of thousands of dollars to protect the funeral home where his body is being kept and stored. "We are not barbarians," police Chief Gary Geramo said. "We bury the dead."

The Senate rejected an effort Wednesday to expand the use of firearms on some of the nation's most frequently visited federal lands, handing gun control advocates a modest success. The measure, backed by the National Rifle Association, represented one of two efforts Wednesday by gun rights supporters to take the offensive in Congress.

Associated Press

A census first: Black voter turnout tops whites

WASHINGTON (AP) — Making history, America's blacks voted at higher rates than whites in 2012, hitting Democrat Barack Obama to victory amid voter apathy, particularly among young people, new census data show. Despite increasing population, the number of white voters declined for the first time since 1998.

Blacks were the only race or ethnic group to show an increase in voter turnout in November, most notably in the Midwest and South-eastern U.S., the Census Bureau said Wednesday. The analysis, based on a sample survey of voters last year, is viewed as the best source of

white turnout across all race and ethnic groups fell for a second consecutive presidential election, from 64 percent to 62 percent in November, according to the census figures.

The data underscores how turnout plays an important role in elections for both whites and blacks, who will remain the two largest racial groups of eligible voters for the next decade. While Hispanics are the fast-growing demographic group, they currently make up a smaller share of eligible voters because many are children and non-citizens, limiting their electoral impact for the immediate future.

Table with columns: Today's Outlook, Retail Ads, Classified Ads, Subscriber Service, Values \$47. Includes a small bar chart showing trends for various categories.